



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An Electronic Newsletter in Support of Statewide Interoperable Communications in Montana
VOLUME 8 • ISSUE 17 • Nov. 2, 2012



Public Safety Communications Highlights

- Starting at 2:00 am on Sunday morning, Nov. 4, Daylight Saving Time (DST) ends. So, remember to turn your clocks back one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, Nov. 3.
- The Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) is developing a series of case studies using real-world examples of how training and planning have made a difference in responding to natural disasters and other emergencies. Click [here](#) to learn how North Carolina responders kept communications systems operational during Hurricane Irene in Aug. 2011.

Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB) Meeting Update

The following is a summary of the information presented at the Tues., Oct. 9 Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB) meeting.

DES Grant Status Report: Angie Mullikin, DES Grants Manager, reported that two DHS planning grants, one for the NE Billings Communications site and one for the Limestone Hill site in Broadway County have been closed out. Grants have been awarded to Yellowstone County to move forward on the NE Billings site.

Trunking Projects Status Update: Quinn Ness, Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) Bureau Chief, updated the group on trunking projects at the Greycliff and Butte 9-1-1 sites. Butte-Silver Bow is working with Motorola on the procurement and installation of a new console for the Butte 9-1-1 Communications Center. Installation of the Eastern Zone Controller is progressing towards completion, and Max Pangburn, Richland County, should be commended for his work on this project. Quinn also provided an overview of the life-cycle planning process document for system trunking that the SIGB Technical Working Group is reviewing and has been working on with Motorola.

FirstNet & Broadband Technical Working Group: Warren Dupuis, Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), provided an overview of the national public safety broadband network and the new federal First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) and described the need to create a

Broadband Technical Working Group. Board members approved the adoption of a Charter for this group and voted to appoint the SITSD Network Bureau Chief to chair the group and the PSSB Bureau Chief, Quinn Ness, as the vice chair.

SIGB Technical Working Group: Major Tom Butler, Montana Highway Patrol, reported that progress continues on the Hysham site lease. In the near term, the technical group will be focusing on statewide radio system operations, maintenance and upgrades, and related life-cycle planning issues.

SIGB Legislative Working Group: Beaverhead Commissioner Mike McGinley, Chair, said that MACo met at the end of last month and passed a resolution to support a permanent and stable governance structure and funding for the administration of the public safety communications system.

Microwave Network System Update: Roger Smith, Lewis and Clark County, has submitted more than 50 site inventories to DES for grant reporting purposes as well as to track site repairs. Nine sites are now associated with the Eastern Zone Controller and are operating in wide-area trunking.

Border Grant Update: Roger also reported that progress is being made on the trunking equipment for the Opheim, Marion and Centennial sites. Grant-funded radio equipment also has been delivered to the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) in Havre, and their technical folks will be installing it. A control station is to be installed at the CBP dispatch center. Also of note is that the agreement with the State of Montana and the Chippewa Cree Tribe for access and use of the Centennial Mountain site has been executed by all of the parties.

Next SIGB Meeting: It is set for Tues., Nov. 13 in Room 152 of the State Capitol beginning at 10:00 am. Agenda items should be provided to [Warren Dupuis](#). Here is the [link](#) for next month's agenda and meeting materials.

PSSB Reminds LMR Users of FCC Narrowbanding Mandate

The Jan., 1, 2013 narrowbanding compliance deadline is fast approaching for VHF/UHF public safety and commercial licensees below 512 MHz. These frequencies must operate at 12.5 kHz or below prior to this date.

In late August, the FCC issued an [Enforcement Advisory](#) that not only emphasized its commitment

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to aggressively enforcing the narrowbanding transition deadline, but also outlined the penalties for failure to comply with the deadline. Violators may be subject to license revocation, monetary forfeitures of up to \$16,000 for each violation or each day of a continuing violation, and up to \$112,500 for any single act or failure to act.

The latest statistics show that about one-third of FCC licensees nationwide have yet to transition to narrowband (12.5 kHz) technology. In Montana, that figure stands at just under 25%.

PSSB remains committed to helping local, tribal and state agencies walk through the narrowbanding relicensing process. To date, dozens of agencies have had PSSB help them, and we anticipate providing continued assistance in the months to come. Simply contact PSSB communications manager [Scott Bradford](#) at 406-444-2782 for free assistance with converting FCC licenses to cover narrowband requirements.

Need more information? Detailed information and references concerning narrowbanding are available at www.fcc.gov/narrowbanding.

NECP Goal # 2 Reporting Compliance Goals Reached

Kudos are due to the counties and individuals listed in the table below who recently submitted their National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) Goal #2 Performance Evaluations. The submission of these three evaluations successfully propelled Montana past the minimum compliance reporting rate of 75% required by the Dept. of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency Communications (OEC).

NECP PERFORMANCE REPORTS			
Compliance Rate <u>Last</u> Reporting Period: 73%		Compliance Rate <u>Current</u> Reporting Period: 79%	
County	Person Reporting	County	Person Reporting
Carbon County	Dan McJunkin, Undersheriff	Mineral County	Sheriff Ernest Ornelas
Stillwater County	Carol Arkell, Deputy DES Coordinator	Compliance Goal of at least 75% Achieved!	

Seventy-nine percent of Montana counties have now submitted their Performance Evaluations, which report on the county's ability to communicate, manage resources, and make timely decisions during an incident, exercise or planned event. In late July, 100% of Montana counties had submitted their Communications Capability summaries, which

access the key elements of the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum.

Construction Begins on Southeast Montana Project

The first of six tower foundations was completed last week at the Fallon County Dispatch Center in Baker, MT, part of a comprehensive six site communications project led by Fallon County.

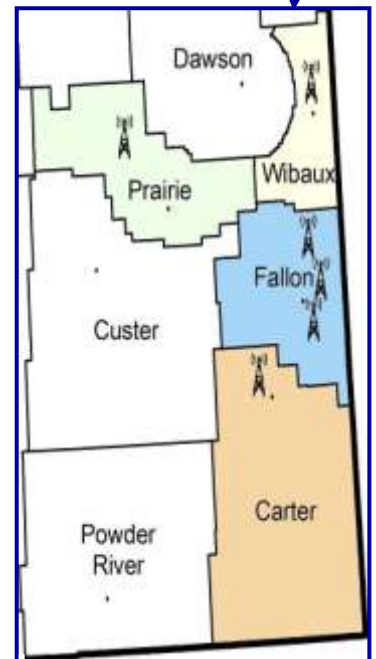
The project will cover construction of six new self-supporting towers that are designed to support the weight of planned microwave dishes, all of which have been engineered with appropriate path analysis studies for future installation. In addition, the project will implement recommended R56 grounding, back-up power to five sites, and foundations for shelter, generators and propane tanks. The sites are located in Carter, Fallon, Prairie and Wibaux Counties, and are an important part of the overall Montana interoperability plan.



"This project is a major step toward our goal of building a microwave network to provide a redundant dial tone to the Dispatch Center," said Chuck Lee, Fallon County DES Director and project manager.

"A dependable, redundant interoperable communications system is critical for our region. In the truest sense of the word, the lives of our residents depend on our ability to communicate."

In addition to the Baker tower, Sabre Towers and Poles, along with



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subcontractor, B & B Foundation Services, is already constructing a second foundation at the Markuson site in Carter County. According to Lee, the goal is to complete all the concrete work before winter sets in and complete the tower stacking during the winter. The target for final completion is April 13, 2013 due to DHS grant requirements.

Cooperation and assistance is coming from a variety of public and private sources. "Roger Smith, the Lewis and Clark County Microwave Network Administrator, has been extremely helpful in getting everything prepared for the bidding process," Lee said. "It has been great working with him and with Bob Brenner of Tab Electronics."

These upgrades not only improve the reliability of all of these communications sites, but, ultimately, they also will support a microwave system that will provide back-up redundancy for the Fallon County Dispatch Center, which serves a four-county area covering nearly 8,000 square miles. Dispatchers at the center also regularly communicate with responders in North and South Dakota as well as Wyoming. Microwave connectivity with the statewide public safety communications system also will be possible in the future.

Mutual Aid Wallet and Visor Cards Available Online

PSSB is pleased to announce the availability of online versions of *Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies* Wallet and Visor Cards. The cards are designed to be used as handy reference tools for use by first responders across the state.

They were created as PDF files that can be printed back-to-back in color. The cards list all the mutual aid and common frequency color names, the frequency number and its usage. Space also is provided to write in local channel numbers.

Montana Mutual Aid and Common Frequencies Visor Card					
Local Channel	Color Name	Frequency Number	Frequency Name	Usage	Notes
1	Blue	157.5000	157.5000	General Mutual Aid & Coordination	
2	Yellow	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
3	Green	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
4	Red	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
5	Orange	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
6	Purple	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
7	Brown	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
8	Pink	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
9	White	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
10	Black	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
11	Grey	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
12	Light Blue	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
13	Light Green	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
14	Light Yellow	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
15	Light Red	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
16	Light Orange	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
17	Light Purple	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
18	Light Brown	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
19	Light Pink	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	
20	Light White	241.2000	241.2000	Statewide Mutual Aid & Coordination	

Please visit this website: http://pssb.mt.gov/mutual_aid_manual.mcpx to access the files.

Upcoming Meetings & Training Sessions

- **Thurs., Nov. 8: Northern Tier Consortium**
Havre • 10:00 am - noon
Hill County Detention Center Courtroom Mtg. Area
1450 2nd St. West
- **Tues., Nov. 13: Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB)**
Helena • 10:00 am - noon
State Capitol, Room 152
http://itsd.mt.gov/policy/councils/sigb/11132012_meeting.mcpx
- **Tues., Dec. 4: State Agency Radio Users Task Force Meeting**
Helena • 2:30 - 4:00 pm
Mitchell Bldg., 125 N. Roberts, Rm. 53
- **Tues., Dec. 4: SIGB Technical Working Group**
Helena • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
State DES Conference Room
Fort Harrison, 1956 Mount Majors Street



Nov. 6 - Election Day
Don't Forget to Vote!



Nov. 12 - Veteran's Day
Honoring All Who Served



Nov. 22 - Thanksgiving Day
Happy Turkey Day!

State Offices will be Closed on These Holidays